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TAGS: [PREL](#) [HR](#) [SR](#)

SUBJECT: CROATIAN PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR POSITIVE ON VISIT OF
SERBIAN PRESIDENT TADIC

Classified By: CDA Greg Delawie for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The June 27 visit by Serbian President Tadic to Croatia was excellent, Presidential foreign policy advisor Budimir Loncar told DCM June 28. Tadic was very open and forthcoming with Croatian President Mesic.

¶2. (C) Tadic indicated that the Montenegro question is now completely settled, Loncar said; there will be much better relations between Serbia and Montenegro now that the independence question off the table.

¶3. (C) The situation in Serbia itself is not improving, Tadic said; instead, polarization among three large groupings of Serbs is getting worse: the first group consists of extreme nationalists; they are relatively primitive, but know how to manipulate emotions. The second group, in which Tadic placed himself, was "extreme pro-West." The third group was of "conservative democrats" like PM Kostunica; they are rather passive in the majority. It is important to wake them up and move them more in the direction of Europe, Tadic noted, because they are potentially an important new source of support.

¶4. (C) The leadership of the Orthodox Church is independent of these three groups, Tadic noted, but it is probably closest to the conservative democrats. It is not ready to take on the nationalists, but it does generally have confidence in Kostunica.

¶5. (C) Croatia is ahead of Serbia, Tadic told Mesic. It can help lead Serbia more towards Europe. Together, Serbia and Croatia can lead the rest of the region toward Europe, he continued; they should be partners in this endeavour.

¶6. (C) Tadic and Mesic also discussed return of missing persons; intensifying relations in all fields, especially regarding economics; working together to attract foreign investment to the region; and a fall conference in Belgrade regarding terrorism and corruption that Mesic plans to attend.

¶7. (U) Bio Note: Budimir Loncar was Foreign Minister of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and SFRY ambassador to Washington, among many other significant foreign policy jobs. He therefore knows the region and its players quite well.

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